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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1994-1995 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1996

PART V. SOUTH WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Section 5 - Egypt

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.95-02237

V.5 EGYPT

1. Beneficiary population

1. At 31 December 1994, some 7,220 persons were registered as refugees in Egypt, including 6,060 Somalis, and 950 persons of other nationalities including stateless persons. Of the total, only 16 per cent were men.

2. Developments in 1994 and 1995

2. During 1994, the UNHCR Regional Office in Cairo began interviewing Sudanese nationals to assess the validity of their claims. The October 1994 occupation of the UNHCR office by a group from southern Sudan, mainly women and children, drew wide attention to the plight of Sudanese in Egypt and required immediate action to help the neediest, pending determination of their status. The worsening economic situation in Egypt compounded their difficulties, and their need for financial support grew as a consequence.

3. With the appointment of a Regional External Relations Officer in September 1994, activities were undertaken to stimulate the public's awareness of refugee matters. The media conducted interviews in Arabic with refugees and produced video films of refugee situations for presentation in schools and other educational institutions.

4. Voluntary repatriation to North-West Somalia resumed at the beginning of 1995 but this development did not affect the Somali refugee population in Egypt, since most of them originated from southern Somalia and Mogadishu.

3. 1996 country programmes

(a) Objectives

5. Egypt is a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, and to the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention. Living conditions in Egypt, however, remain precarious because of the economic difficulties, primarily affecting the most vulnerable among the refugees and asylum-seekers. Simultaneously, the declining economic situation and the scarcity of job opportunities make it difficult for refugees to find employment. As a result, UNHCR assistance programmes will aim at filling this gap by providing care and maintenance to recognized refugees in need of material support.

6. All refugees in Egypt live in urban areas and will continue requiring subsistence allowances to survive. They will also continue needing access to education and medical facilities. Women will be specifically targeted by UNHCR for vocational training and family planning activities. Despite limited prospects for local integration, the assistance programme will seek to focus on skills training to enable refugees to become self-sufficient during their stay in Egypt and to prepare them for their eventual return to their countries of origin.

7. A local settlement project will provide subsistence allowances and legal assistance to elderly refugees who have been in Egypt since the first World War and who have been unable to become self-sufficient.

8. **Somali refugees**: These refugees, consisting mainly of women and children without the support of adult males, are victims of ethnic conflict in Somalia and are stranded in Egypt. Opportunities for durable solutions including voluntary repatriation and resettlement are infrequent. UNHCR will therefore continue providing them with basic assistance until durable solutions can be identified.

9. **Ethiopian refugees**: This is a diminishing caseload, consisting mainly of young single males who came from the Sudan holding Convention Travel Documents and who had been referred to the UNHCR Regional Office in Cairo for educational assistance. Those who have finished their education and who are unable to repatriate will continue to benefit from limited care and maintenance.

10. **Stateless persons**: The majority of these persons, estimated to be 90 in 1994, are of Armenian, Albanian, White Russian, Polish and Yugoslav origin. Without any sources of income and support, they will continue to benefit from subsistence allowances and regular visits by social workers.

11. **Nationals from the former Yugoslavia**: These persons became refugees sur place while studying in Egypt. In keeping with the UNHCR policy on displaced persons from the former Yugoslavia, they receive individual assistance according to their needs.

12. **Various other nationalities**: Individual cases from countries in Africa or in the Middle East who fear persecution in their countries of origin may benefit from protection and assistance. For reasons of internal security, the Government of Egypt frequently requests UNHCR to explore possibilities of finding resettlement solutions in third countries for eligible persons and to ensure that they have a regular source of income.

(b) Proposed budgets for 1996

(i) Care and maintenance

13. Basic subsistence will be provided to 5,700 needy refugees from various African countries and 2,700 refugees, mostly women and children, will benefit from medical assistance. With the provision of health services to urban refugees remaining at about the same level as in 1995, more emphasis will be placed on family planning activities aimed at refugee women. This is a direct outcome of the International Population Conference that was held in Egypt in 1994 in which the Family Planning Association, the implementing partner of UNHCR, was actively involved.

14. Primary and secondary education will be made available to some 1,700 refugee children in public and private Egyptian schools, either in Arabic or English. The amount allocated for education has been slightly decreased since the majority of refugee students will be enrolled in public schools. Since refugees

prefer to attend vocational courses instead of being assisted with income-generating activities, the amount for vocational training for about 175 refugees was increased to meet this preference. It is expected that this will eventually lead to a more rapid achievement of self-sufficiency in both the country of asylum and upon their eventual return to either country of origin.

(ii) Local settlement

15. An estimated 90 individual cases living in Cairo and Alexandria will be assisted under a local settlement project that is a continuation of similar activities carried out in previous years.

(iii) Resettlement

16. Up to 200 refugees may be resettled in third countries in 1996. Priority will be given to the disabled, victims of torture and women-at-risk.

(c) Implementing partners

17. CARITAS will be responsible for social welfare activities including individual counselling and home visits to elderly Armenians and to stateless persons who came to Egypt during or soon after the First World War. Most of them are single elderly women. CARITAS will also be responsible for referring medical cases to hospitals, implementing educational activities and paying education grants, placing students in secondary schools and monitoring.

18. The Family Planning Association will provide maternal and child health care services.

19. The Refugee Ministry of St. Andrews and All Saints in Cairo will provide English language courses to refugee children.

(d) Programme Delivery and Administrative Costs

20. Variations due to changes in budget parameters are not discussed in the subsequent analysis (Overview of UNHCR Activities, Part I (A/AC.96/845) refers).

(i) 1994 expenditure (all sources of funds)

21. The 1994 expenditures were lower than the revised estimates because the newly created post of Senior Regional External Relations Officer remained vacant until mid-September. This resulted in savings, mainly in salaries, common staff costs and travel.

(ii) Revised 1995 requirements (all sources of funds)

22. The revised 1995 requirements are higher than the initial estimates. This is mainly due to the creation of one post of Field Staff Security Officer and the provision, under temporary assistance, for a Public Information Assistant for six months to assist the Senior Regional External Relations Officer in the public

information activities initiated in the region. The revised requirements also cover the purchase of equipment for these activities and for upgrading computer equipment in the Regional Office in Cairo.

(iii) **Initial 1996 requirements**

23. The 1996 support requirements are slightly lower than the revised 1995 requirements. In respect of staffing, no significant changes are expected. Salaries, common staff costs and non-staff costs are therefore at levels similar t the revised 1995 requirements. Provision has been made for the replacement of som old furniture and equipment.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN EGYPT

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1994	1995		1996	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1994 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
1,228.4 a/	2,024.9	2,024.9	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	2,012.3
19.6 b/	–	–	VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	–
81.4 c/	86.8	85.2	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	77.7
27.8 d/	29.9	29.4	RESETTLEMENT	29.4
697.5	945.6	1,183.4	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Overview Tables (Part II)	1,120.8
2,054.7	**3,087.2**	**3,322.9**	**SUB–TOTAL OPERATIONS**	**3,240.2**
142.2	153.2	187.6	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Overview Tables (Part II)	182.7
2,196.9	**3,240.4**	**3,510.5**	**T O T A L (1)**	**3,422.9**
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
24.8	106.3	–	EDUCATION ACCOUNT	–
28.3	–	–	OTHER TRUST FUNDS	–
45.2	16.0	74.0	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT Junior Professional Officer See Overview Tables (Part II)	74.0
98.3	**122.3**	**74.0**	**T O T A L (2)**	**74.0**
2,295.2	**3,362.7**	**3,584.5**	**GRAND TOTAL (1+2)**	**3,496.9**

a/ of which US$ 1,217 incurred against Other Programmes
b/ obligation incurred against Other Programmes
c/ of which US$ 8,507 incurred against Other Programmes
d/ of which US$ 7,788 incurred against Other Programmes